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ROUND TABLE

REQUISITES OF A DURABLE PEACE

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A Radio Discussion by

MORTIMER J. ADLER *and* JAMES BURNHAM

Including

"Toward a Durable Society"

by ROBERT M. HUTCHINS

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Around the Round Table . . . .

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JAMES BURNHAM, assistant professor of philosophy of New York University, was born in Chicago in 1905. He studied at Princeton University, where he received his A.B. degree. From Princeton he went to Oxford University in England and in 1929 was granted his M.A. degree. Since that time he has been connected with New York University. He is the co-author of *Introduction to Philosophical Analysis* (with Philip Wheelwright) (1931) and author of *The Managerial Revolution* (1941) and *The Machiavellians* (1943).

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REQUISITES OF A DURABLE PEACE

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MR. ADLER: The question of the peace is in the mind of a great many people, and because you and I, Mr. Burnham, disagree so sharply about some of the problems of peace, the ROUND TABLE today has eliminated its usual third participant. There will be no referee in the ring with us.

MR. BURNHAM: Fine! I am delighted to know that we can get at each other without interference. I have been wanting, for a long time, to argue this problem of a durable peace with someone holding your views.

MR. ADLER: Of the various questions concerning the future peace, it seems to me the most important question for us to discuss first is the possibility of peace, for, unless peace is really possible, there is no practical problem for us to discuss.

MR. BURNHAM: It is a sensible beginning. It certainly is a waste of time to discuss impossibilities, although that fact does not prevent men from spending a lot of time with them.

I wonder, in the evidence of history, whether peace—an eternal and durable and lasting peace—really is possible. In the past, in all societies, men have always fought, although for different reasons in different societies. Thus, on the evidence of the past do we not have to expect the same thing in the future?

MR. ADLER: I think that you are reading only half of history. Of course, wars have always existed in the past, but may I call your attention to the fact that peace has also existed in the past—peace

within communities—peace where men are living together under law and government? The peace is relatively durable in so far as they are living under just laws and government. I would, therefore, argue that if it is possible to have a world government, a just world government, it is possible for there to be a durable world peace.

MR. BURNHAM: I am not being entirely pessimistic. Of course we know also that there has been peace for a while—sometimes for a generation, two generations, or three generations—and that is the sensible thing for which to aim. We know also that at times men have been able to eliminate big-scale wars. If we are going to have a goal that really means something, it seems to me that it should be not peace forever, but peace for a while, and no big wars.

MR. ADLER: But you would admit the distinction, I'm sure, between a truce, which is merely the absence of overt hostilities and shooting between governments and peoples, and a real peace in which the peoples are living together under one law and government? Diplomacy is the continuation of war during the truce. We have never had peace on earth among nations, and we never will have peace on earth among nations, but only truces that are more or less prolonged, broken by more and more destructive wars. I come back to my original point—the possibility of peace is the possibility of world government.

MR. BURNHAM: It seems to me that you are trying to settle the whole problem by words. If you eliminate disease, then you will have health. True enough! If you eliminate warring governments, if you eliminate separate governments, then governments cannot fight each other. But words are not going to settle anything. Men will get killed; cities ruined; lands devastated, whether we call it war or whether we call it revolution, civil war, insurrection, or whatever it may be.

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MR. ADLER: I do not think that it is a matter of words. I should be a fool to deny that at any time in man's life on earth there is going to be an abolition of crime or an elimination of all conflict and violence. I am only saying that what most men understand by war is the armed conflict of nations.

MR. BURNHAM: When do you think this world state, with eternal peace, is going to come about?

MR. ADLER: This thing which I think is quite possible I also think is not probable in the immediate future—taking the immediate future to be our lifetime or even our children's lifetime. I will be quite frank with you in saying that it is a remote but practicably attainable idea.

MR. BURNHAM: That is just the trouble with these remote possibilities. When people keep their eyes focused on them, they neglect the problems of the present. Moreover, we cannot really affect the distant future. Still, even if peace is possible, I sometimes wonder whether, in all respects, a perpetual and eternal peace is desirable.

MR. ADLER: Do I understand you to say that peace is not desirable? That is a queer position. I never heard it taken by anyone before.

MR. BURNHAM: It sounds odd; I know it sounds odd. On the other hand, there are things worse than wars. Some wars are just; some wars of the past have been just. A perpetual peace which equals a perpetual tyranny is not much of an ideal.

MR. ADLER: But let me call your attention to two things there. Just wars have been wars obviously fought against aggression and tyranny. You would not want to keep just wars in order to keep their causes, too. If we eliminate aggression and tyranny, we eliminate the need for just wars. In the second place, it seems to me that under no conditions is war more desirable than peace.

MR. BURNHAM: Let me take up this problem of desirability in another way. What is desirable means what we take for our goal.

If we take eternal peace for our goal and if I'm right in saying tha that is impossible, that may not even be the best way to get wha peace is actually possible.

For instance, if one makes pleasure his goal, that is not really th best way to get pleasure. It just turns him into a roué. If one make health his goal, he becomes just a hypochondriac.

MR. ADLER: It seems to me that you have switched the ground here. I refuse to admit that a lasting peace is impossible, although would agree with you that it is improbable in the immediate future The improbability of peace in the immediate future does not mea that it is not probable in the long run. My feeling is that you ar failing to distinguish between proximate practical ends and mor remote practical ends, which are just as practical and must b worked for. It took three centuries for men to cooperate to build a Gothic cathedral. In the course of social change toward peace men must cooperate with generations still to come. Unless we ar prepared to do that, peace will never be achieved on earth.

MR. BURNHAM: There is another trouble with these remot goals, even if they are not strictly impossible. They are just th ones that tend to make people fanatic. Men slaughter others i order to bring about the Kingdom of God or the kingdom of Caesar Men slaughter one another, too, in order to try to bring about eter nal peace. In the name of peace, they are willing to kill.

MR. ADLER: I think that by this time we have classified our selves, Burnham—you as a realist, with his eye on immediate practical consequences; me as an idealist, looking at a utopian future. I should be willing to accept the classification of idealist if I could change the definition a little. I think an idealist is a man with his feet on the ground. A realist is a man with his head there also You have to lift your head up, Burnham, if you want to see further than your toes. You are looking only at what is under your feet right now.

MR. BURNHAM: We have to begin with the earth; that is the real truth of the matter.

We are not going to settle anything further, I think, by the labels. Let us try to get more concrete. How can we put the problems connected with the requisites for a durable peace in some more definite way?

MR. ADLER: On the very questions which we are discussing today there is an article which we have both read in the current issue of *Fortune* magazine by President Robert M. Hutchins of the University of Chicago. Some of the statements in this article have been submitted for our consideration by the ROUND TABLE. I think that there is no better way of getting down to concrete proposals than by considering these statements by President Hutchins.[1]

ANNOUNCER: "*. . . . If we are to have world civilization, we must get the world to accept an ideal, to pursue it deliberately, and to pursue it as common to the whole world community. . . . . If we can determine the ideal and discover how we might persuade ourselves and persuade others to join in its pursuit, our present requirements will be met. In any event, any world political organization must follow, and not precede agreement upon and pursuit of the common ideal. . . . .*"

MR. BURNHAM: If what Mr. Hutchins says in this article is true, then we have a real basis for pessimism. Then there is no chance, not merely of eternal peace, but even peace in our time. If everyone has to agree on fundamental principles, on a common ideal, how do we possibly expect to bring about such a situation? Here we have the real basis of fanaticism. Men who project a common ideal and insist that everybody has to agree with it are always ready for wars. That is the basis on which the Mohammedans tried to conquer the world; the basis on which the Nazis, the Bolsheviks, and the extremists of the French Revolution tried to subordinate everyone to their will.

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[1] This article by President Hutchins, "Toward a Durable Society," appears in the June, 1943, issue of *Fortune* magazine. See the complete reprint of this article beginning on p. 18 of this transcript.

MR. ADLER: There is another definition of a fanatic. A fanatic has been said to be a man who redoubles his efforts as he loses sight of the goal. It seems to me that I could turn the compliment in your direction. You, because you are unwilling to look at remote goals, which are practicable and attainable, are a fanatic in the sense indicated.

May I, however, offer you a reinterpretation of President Hutchins' statements?

MR. BURNHAM: Go ahead. How would you put it?

MR. ADLER: It seems to me that Hutchins is not offering the idea of a militant Mohammedan crusade to convert the world to common ideals. What he is saying comes to this: first, that world society requires unity of government and that that unity of government, or world community, can be achieved in only one of two ways—by conquest or by voluntary association. You would not argue, would you, that conquest is the way of achieving a world community?

MR. BURNHAM: If we stick to the question of what makes peace possible, we have to recognize that all communities have been established by conquest or by force—this country like every other country that has ever existed. Moreover, it is where that force has been adequately established that peace is existent, even on a world scale.

Take a prominent example from history—the first two centuries of the Roman Empire. There was no big war. There were wars on the borders, but within the civilized world there was a reasonable degree of peace, and peace was established in effect by conquest.

MR. ADLER: I will admit the example given. I think it is a very good one. The Romans did, for a time, through conquest and force, establish peace over a large area of the world. But suppose you look at the Roman peace—the Roman peace from the point of view of the Britons. Tacitus tells us that Calgacus, a leader of the Britons, said of the Romans: "Those deadly Romans, who plunder,

butcher, steal, and misname these things 'empire'; who make it desolation and call it a peace."[2]

MR. BURNHAM: You are getting off the subject again, Adler. You are not arguing for peace but for the kind of society that you think ought to be good, whether there is peace or war.

MR. ADLER: No. Let me come back to show you that I am arguing for peace. Because the Roman conquest was unjust and subjected peoples, it ultimately broke up. The subjected peoples revolted. You cannot get a durable peace by conquering other peoples. The Britons revolted; the Gauls revolted; and the conquered Germans, to a more limited extent, revolted against the Romans.

MR. BURNHAM: Let us come back later to this matter of how to make the peace last.

I want to take up another point you made. You said that a substantial world government is possible only by conquest or by voluntary association or something of that sort. It seems to me you put the alternatives in too extreme a way. It is not a question of absolute conquest and force versus some utopian idea of free consent that has never taken place. Why can't we conceive it more in terms of a balancing of the actual powers and forces that exist? That is the way, as a rule, that a peace which is not mere conquest and force has been established in the past.

MR. ADLER: I hope you realize that I am not denying that force enters into all human government. I am not talking about an angelic situation in which just a suggestion or peace by itself will do.

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[2] Publius Cornelius Tacitus was a famous Roman historian and orator, born about A.D. 55. He held various public offices in his early career and in 97 he was elected consul. He was married to the daughter of the famous Agricola. After his consulship he devoted himself chiefly to writing. Among his works are *Dialogue on Orators; Agricola*, a biography; *Germania*, a description of the German peoples; *Annals*, covering the period from 14 to 68; and *Histories*, narrating events from 68 to 96. Tacitus died about 120.

The above quotation is from *Agricola*, chap. 30.

But I am saying that peoples living in diverse communities can come together and form a single larger community in only two ways, either by one conquering the other—in the Roman manner, the Napoleonic manner—or by communities, such as our own original Colonies in this country coming together, by voluntary federative act, and forming a single larger community to which they gave their allegiance. Those are the only alternatives.

MR. BURNHAM: But it seems to me that you are leaving out a large part of our own history. Our community contains a good deal more than the original Colonies, and many of the additions were not obtained in quite these voluntary and free ways that you suggested. But can we altogether object to them? Was it a bad thing that the Indians were not left in charge, for instance? Was it even a bad thing that the Mexican War took place, in spite of what our history books tell us when they always apologize for us? Isn't it better that that territory should be under the control of a responsible government?

MR. ADLER: I am not denying either American imperialism and the American subjection of conquered peoples or the American seizure of land by force. I am only saying that if we are concerned with world peace, no durable world society can be built in that way. If the Germans were to conquer the whole world and impose a peace in the Roman manner, that peace would last only so long as the subject peoples were unable to arise and defend themselves and restore their rights.

MR. BURNHAM: To carry us a few steps further, why don't we go back to Mr. Hutchins' article?

ANNOUNCER: ". . . . *If we want a world civilization we shall have to join in the pursuit of the democratic ideal. . . . . You may well say that the ideal is unattainable. We have not succeeded in making this country democratic; how can we hope to make the whole world democratic? My answer is that if we cannot make the whole world democratic we had better give up the idea of a durable world civilization, for the only*

civilization that can endure is a civilization based on the common humanity of men, on their common human rights, and only democracy recognizes these rights. People fight, and they are entitled to fight, until they get the rights which human nature carries with it."

MR. ADLER: Let me interpret what I think that means so that we can consider the proposition.

MR. BURNHAM: Go ahead.

MR. ADLER: In the first place, Mr. Hutchins is saying that a world civilization means a world community and that world community is a requisite for world peace. I think that he is saying, in the second place, that a world community, like any other community, small or large, will be durable only to the extent that it is just. Hence, a durable peace depends on a durable world community, which is a just community.

In the third place, he is saying what we ought to consider—that the only just society and government is a democratic one. From which it would follow then that world peace, or a durable world community, would depend on the establishment of world-wide democracy.

MR. BURNHAM: To tell the truth, I cannot tell right away whether I agree with that or not, especially as you interpret it. For example, there is this word "democracy." I notice nowadays that some of the leading totalitarians in this country are those who talk most about democracy. If democracy means what some people say it means, if it means a government that in some mysterious way expresses the will, for example, of all the people, how are we ever going to tell what a democracy is? Haven't Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, for example, just as much right as the more ordinarily considered democratic governments to say that they are expressing the will of the people?

MR. ADLER: May I propose an alternative consideration of democracy? I believe that you will agree.

MR. BURNHAM: I should like to hear it.

Mr. Adler: Democracy involves two steps, and I shall treat them independently.

In the first place, the democratic government is fundamentally a constitutional government. By "constitutional government" I mean a government of law in which all men—officeholders, rulers as well as ruled—are under law. I mean one in which enforcible sanctions are applicable against rulers or officeholders; in which power is used to limit power; in which the citizens are protected in their juridical rights and have their legal or civil liberties guarded.

Mr. Burnham: I am very anxious to agree with you when you put it that way. That seems to me to make sense and has meaning.

Mr. Adler: But I have a second point I want to add. The description thus far is just constitutional government and not democratic constitutional government. What makes constitutional government democratic are these next two points: universal suffrage and the abolition of all fixed, privileged classes, so that all the natural endowments of men are available for choice in the leadership of the country.

Mr. Burnham: But when you add the last, how do you differentiate democracy, for example, from socialism or communism?

Mr. Adler: I have not, in this definition of democracy, mentioned any points about economic organization or arrangement. I am talking in purely political terms—that a political democracy depends upon the abolition of privileged classes, that is, classes that have, by reason of wealth or birth, unequal political status. The equality of political status, regardless of birth and wealth, is what I mean by the democratic condition.

Mr. Burnham: I will take your definition, Adler, as it stands, in order to get ahead with the discussion. But I wonder about several points that you made.

For example, does history really show us that democracies last longer or are more durable than other governments? That is not

the way I read history, even though I should like to do so and even though you express my own ideal of government, especially in the first point you make. As we go back in the past, we find that a number of tyrannies that historically have existed in the ancient world, in the Middle Ages, and so on have been longer-lived than the democracies. Moreover, simply because something lasts long does not seem to me to make it necessarily better.

Mr. Adler: That is not my point. We ought to make clear that we are not arguing for durability for its own sake but that we are considering a durable peace. The question is whether or not a democratic political organization makes a society more durable.

I think that I conflict with you on two points. First, I think that the evidences of history are all against you. Tyrannies and despotisms are, for the most part, short-lived, compared to the length of life of the modern representative, parliamentary government, such as the United States and England.

In the second place, will you permit me to make a distinction, to which I think you would agree, between the internal and external conditions of durability of a nation?

Mr. Burnham: How would you put that? I do not quite understand you.

Mr. Adler: By the "external" conditions of durability I mean its strength as opposed to other nations in its survival in the competition of other nations.

Mr. Burnham: I see; that is clear enough.

Mr. Adler: By the "internal" durability I mean a government that is able to sustain itself against revolution or factious uprising.

Mr. Burnham: You have your distinction. Now, what are you going to do with it?

Mr. Adler: I am going to argue, in the first place, that just government removes the causes of revolt and faction, that just government does not generate all the conditions of overthrowing a

government. Therefore, if a society is just, as a democratic society is just, then you will have internal durability.

I am going to argue, in the second place, that the strength and health of a society depend upon the choice of its leaders and that only in a democratic government in which, in your language, you would have the free circulation of the élite or, in mine, of anyone, the natural endowments of men being available for leadership, you would have the best leadership and the most effective and healthy society.

Mr. Burnham: But again, I do not want to argue with you about definitions of justice and democracy but rather about the way in which a measure of peace can be assured in the world. The fact is that most of the governments of the world are not democratic. Many of them are not in a position to become democratic. We therefore must face the situation that either we have to give up the idea of peace in our time and our children's time, after this war is over, or attempt to work out some scheme of world order that will recognize the differences, even including a recognition of the fact that there exist, and that there are going to continue to be, unjust governments. It seems to me, to tell the truth, that democracy and justice demand rather that we should be able to get along with those with whom we disagree, not so much with those with whom we agree. Anybody can do that.

Mr. Adler: Let me take your point. I will agree with you that if, in the immediate future, we cannot make peace as I think it can only be made—by world government—then the democracies of the world, which must coexist in the world with other kinds of government, will have to be prepared to defend themselves by other means and to maintain a truce as long as possible.

But let me make your point in the opposite direction. What you said indicates that the kind of truce you are talking about endangers the existence of democracy in the few countries that have democracy. One of the reasons why it seems to me you should change your mind about the desirability of peace is that, if you agree that

democracy is the most just social order, war endangers the survival of democracy.

MR. BURNHAM: I am not by any means convinced that that is the case. As a matter of fact, in many cases we can see that democracy is encouraged and made more lively by conflict, not simply by everything's being static and peaceful. That has happened in the past. Some of the strongest and most active democracies have been those that have been in continual conflict.

It seems to me that here, as well as elsewhere, you will not settle for anything except the limit. I am willing to take fifty years of reasonably assured peace, or even twenty-five, in the place of some permanent peace that may start a thousand years from now.

MR. ADLER: I keep coming back to the point that a truce, if that is all you can get, is desirable and that the longer the truce, the more desirable it is. But truces, by their very nature, are going to be interrupted by more and worse wars. If peace is possible in the long run, must we not aim now, not only at the immediate truce, but at the more ultimate condition which is available to us—namely, a peace which eliminates international wars and permits democracy to thrive in all the countries of the earth?

MR. BURNHAM: But you state your remote goal in such a way that you cannot get along with the facts of the near future. You, for instance, advocate democracy for the whole world as the only way to get peace. President Hutchins himself, in this article we are referring to, expresses the view that even the United States does not have democracy.

MR. ADLER: I do not think that that is President Hutchins' position.

ANNOUNCER: "*. . . . If we want a durable world civilization, then, we must strive for world democracy. How shall we proceed? How can we get the Germans and the Japanese to be democratic? We cannot force them to be democratic. Democracy rests on deliberate consent. We*

cannot force democratic education upon them. . . . . If we cannot terrorize them into democracy and cannot educate them into democracy, how can we make them democratic? . . . . The best postwar planning we can do is to make the United States a working model of democracy now."

MR. BURNHAM: I am just a plain and simple New Yorker, and sometimes I cannot understand what you Chicago slickers say. Can you explain to me, Adler, exactly what Hutchins means in this?

MR. ADLER: I think that I can. What Hutchins is saying is that if we want to convince the world of our intention to make America a working model of democracy, we must all join in the effort to get a few things done right, here and now, as evidence of the sincerity and seriousness of our purpose. Here are some of the things that Hutchins wants done, and I believe that you will agree to them one by one.

MR. BURNHAM: I should like to hear them.

MR. ADLER: He wants us to engage in a frontal attack on racial and religious discrimination.

MR. BURNHAM: Fine.

MR. ADLER: He wants us to attempt to break up the monopolies and cartels that are opposed to a notion of the free distribution of the world's goods. He wants us to assert the political rights of man for all men, by getting rid of such things as the poll tax.

MR. BURNHAM: Who can object?

MR. ADLER: All right. But it is important, nevertheless, to do it. He wants us to do away with taxes that are levied on consumption and hence on the poor man rather than the rich.

MR. BURNHAM: Very well.

MR. ADLER: He wants us to open education on the basis of merit to all the people of this country, regardless of their color or their previous position of servitude. He wants us to establish competitive

scholarships, so that any boy of merit can get all the education that his abilities deserve. You agree to these things, do you not?

MR. BURNHAM: They are fine sentiments.

MR. ADLER: We are not doing them, are we?

MR. BURNHAM: Not so far.

MR. ADLER: You would approve of democracy if we did do them, wouldn't you?

MR. BURNHAM: In every respect. They are fine sentiments, and we all have to agree—at least men of good will will find, I think, nothing to challenge. The trouble is, they are irrelevant. They are irrelevant to the problem that we are considering. In effect Mr. Hutchins is saying that if we set the right example we are going to get peace. It is like a man building a new victory garden this spring. He puts no fence around it. He is going to set a good example to the rabbits. But they get in and they eat up the vegetables. The pacifist nation—a fine thing in a pacifist world—but the world is not pacifistic. Thus the pacifist nation just makes that much easier pickings.

MR. ADLER: Let me challenge you to advance some relative proposal, not for world peace because you cannot conceive world peace —you think it is impossible and not practical. Tell me what proposal you would advance as relative to the attainment of a more or less prolonged truce.

MR. BURNHAM: I am not a politician but a student of politics. I could only suggest an approach. We have to begin with what we have—not with what we may have a thousand years from now. If we want peace, we must work for what you call a "truce" now, not by dreaming of some distant world society where there might be peace. We have to recognize force and the fact that force is an integral element in society. We must attempt to check and to balance forces against one another, so in that checking and balancing none of

them will be tyrannical and supreme over all the others. Wouldn't you agree?

MR. ADLER: Those are all relevant and practical proposals for your very limited aim, and it is an aim I do not disagree with, because I insist—and I repeat—that peace is not immediately probable in the sense I am considering it.

MR. BURNHAM: You advocate world government as the only basis for peace. Very well, do we want to move to world government? How can we do it? By strengthening, it seems to me, the basis for world government that now exists—in the international connections of the labor movement which have been built up, even though they tend to be shattered, unfortunately, by the impact of war—commercial and economic relations, too; scientific relations; transport and communication. These are already international.

MR. ADLER: All those things are quite true. But the trouble with your position, it seems to me, is that you refuse to see that these are means to a goal beyond the immediate future. If you would permit me to consider all these means as slow, progressively organized means toward the attainment of real peace, by the dissolution of national sovereignties and the establishment of world government, I would not disagree with your immediate means.

Let me call your attention to the fact that men like former President Hoover are now prepared to say that we cannot make a peace in a peace conference lasting two years. He claims that a peace conference should go on for twenty-five years. I am only going further, and I think being more practical, when I say that peace conferences may have to last a hundred, or two hundred, years to make peace.

MR. BURNHAM: That does not sound very practical to me. Give men a stake in the peace, and they will not be so ready to go to war. You are trying to have it both ways. You have to base your program for peace in the real world, as it is and it probably will be, or else you are going to have to invent a utopia of your own. The

trouble with utopias is that the utopians are always ready to kill everyone who disagrees with their own particular variety.

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TOWARD A DURABLE SOCIETY

by ROBERT M. HUTCHINS

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THE great hope held out to us now is that the world is small and is getting smaller. The barriers of time and distance, oceans and mountains, have been swept away. A few weeks ago a bomber crossed the Atlantic twice within twenty-four hours. The liberal dream is that this shrinkage makes inevitable the unification of the world and the establishment of an enlightened world order.

These things are perhaps made possible, but certainly not inevitable. Though the distance between Richmond and Washington is only ninety-six miles, one of the bloodiest wars in history was fought by powers which made their headquarters in those two cities. Cain required no modern transportation to get in touch with Abel. All human experience suggests that if people want to fight they enjoy fighting their nearest neighbors more than anybody else. It is easier to get at them; and the advantages they possess, and ought to be deprived of, are more readily discernible to the envious eye. As geographical barriers are removed, political barriers are also likely to fall. But the only world organization of the past was founded on conquest. All the empires of the present, including our own, were founded upon conquest. The liberal dream has no place for conquest. It looks forward to the peaceful political amalgamation of peoples who are culturally diverse into a peaceful world society.

We can have no hope that the increasing horror of war will prevent war. After the last war we all convinced ourselves that the airplane was going to play such a dreadful role in the next one that nobody would ever start it. But desperation and ambition will always be ready to gamble if the stakes are high enough. As the horrors of war have increased, its prizes have grown. The prize now is the possibility of controlling, through the inventions at hand, not a continent or two, but the whole world. And a world political organization could become the greatest object of desperate ambition the world has ever seen. The struggle to control it could make the battles for the control of the Roman Empire look like street fights in a Chicago election.

What makes us think that the situation after this war will be any different from that after the last one? We cannot look to the insignificance of space or the ferocity of war. And we surely cannot claim that we have thought more than we did the last time. After America had been in the first world war for a year and a half the Fourteen Points rang through the world, and the platform of a League of Nations was well known. Now we have nothing but the vague and inadequate generalities of the Atlantic Charter. The position of India, for example, is definitely worse now than it was at this stage of the last war. There is less evidence that we are prepared for any world order than was at hand in 1918.

Since the important divisions among men are not those of space and time, they are not eliminated by the elimination of space and time. If the ideals of one part of the world are antithetical to those of another part, war must follow. The shrinkage of the world, therefore, cannot usher in the brotherhood of men; it can only accelerate the clash of antithetical ideals. Unless it is admitted that men can and should have common ideals, that the natural moral law underlies the diversity of the mores, that the good, the true, and the beautiful are the same for all men, no world civilization is possible.

A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS

We know that there is a natural moral law, and we can understand what it is because we know that man has a nature, and we can understand it. The nature of man, which is the same everywhere, is obscured but not obliterated by the differing conventions of different cultures. The specific quality of human nature, the difference that sets man apart as a species separate from the other animals, is that man is a rational and spiritual being and the other animals are not.

We discover what is good for any species by considering the specific nature of the species. To discover what is good for man we must discover what fulfills his nature. When we speak of what is best for man we mean what is best for him in terms of his rational and spiritual powers. An act or a policy is well directed if it is a manifestation of these powers or tends to develop these powers. The happiness of men, which is the aim of their lives, consists in the fulfillment of their natures, in the fullest exercise of their highest powers; that is, in living in accordance with virtue and intelligence.

As rational and spiritual beings all men are equal. Rationality and spirituality confer human dignity on every individual. No man may regard another merely as an instrument. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as

thyself," is as rigorous a commandment as "Thou shalt not kill." Justice, the cement of human society, is simply the equal treatment of equals.

Men need all kinds of goods in order to exist. But in order to live human lives they must live in accordance with the law of their nature: they must be free, and they must use their freedom to exercise their virtue and intelligence.

Men are social animals. They must live in society in order to exist. But a society is good in proportion as it assists men to realize their human nature. It must be judged by its success in promoting the virtue and intelligence of the people and by its recognition of their essential equality, as well as by its achievement of those goods which are indispensable to mere existence.

Men are political animals. They are not simply gregarious. They form political societies in which there are rulers and ruled. The fullest development of the highest powers of men requires political activity. It requires either that they rule in turn or that they be rulers and ruled at the same time. To deny any man political rights is to deny that he is human.

Men are political, social, rational and spiritual. But they are not angels; they are not divine. Though they are animals with powers which make them essentially different from the other animals, they are animals still. And so they must resort to law as a method of educating and controlling themselves. A law is an ordinance of reason directed to the common good. It is the product of virtue and intelligence and is designed to foster the virtue and intelligence of the people.

THE CREED OF COMFORT

These few simple principles of moral and political philosophy are the minimum basis of any durable world order. "Men cannot work together," said Confucius, "unless they have common principles." If we cannot believe and act upon these principles, and believe and act upon them together, the prospects of a durable world society are not bright.

If this be pessimism, make the most of it. I deny that it is pessimism. It is simply true. We cannot escape the facts by asserting that they do not exist. If we recognize their existence, we may be able to do something about them. Either we grant that we are doomed to perpetual war because no common ideals are possible, or we exert ourselves now to discover what our ideals should be and how to make them the common aspiration of the peoples of the earth. This doctrine is optimistic, because it holds that even at this late date we can save the world by our own exertions.

It is not homogeneity or uniformity that we require. The mores may

vary widely from country to country, but the moral law is the same everywhere. Human beings are different, but they are identical in their humanity. Their identical humanity is the foundation of any durable world civilization.

For civilization is the deliberate pursuit of a common ideal. The pursuit must be conscious; men must know what they are after. The ideal must be common. Civilization implies something more than the yearnings of the few. American civilization, if there is one, is a reflection of the conscious aims of the American people as a whole. If there is any conscious aim of the American people as a whole, the American people are civilized and not otherwise. The aim which makes a people civilized is an ideal, something which they hope they can achieve but which they do not now possess. The ideal of America is comfort for everybody; the ideal of Germany, we are told, is world domination.

Education is a deliberate attempt to form human character in terms of an ideal. To discover the ideal of a country, look at its educational system. Do not listen to what the country says. Pay little attention to what it does. Find out what it brings up its youth for. The educational system of this country centers around getting ahead, as might be expected of a nation whose ideal is comfort for everybody.

We find the same ideal reflected in the slogans of each political era: the full dinner pail, a chicken in every pot, two cars in every garage, and the American Way, coming to us through the courtesy of the National Association of Manufacturers as a large, dark red convertible coupe filled with all the members of the family off to the movies. Depression and war have convinced us that full employment will solve all our problems, with or without the addition supplied by those extreme radicals who think that we may need also to provide the whole world with a pint of milk a day.

If we are to have world civilization, we must get the world to accept an ideal, to pursue it deliberately, and to pursue it as common to the whole world community. But the ideal of comfort, which is the best we have been able to think of for ourselves, will never do as the aim of a world order. Men can never be comfortable enough. Two dinner pails, two chickens, four cars, and a quart of milk a day are better than half as much. And since they are better, they constitute the new ideal. We never can have enough material goods if material goods are what we want. Any world order with this ideal will be torn to pieces by the divisions to which it leads. So Richard Tawney said of the divisions between capital and labor: capital was quite right to say that labor could never be satisfied;

there was no reason why labor should be satisfied as long as the ideal c the country was wealth, as long as wealth, instead of being proportione to function, belonged to him who could get it, and as long as it was th duty of every man to get as much as he could.

A nation that has comfort and no higher ideal can fight only a de fensive war. It is fighting to retain its comfort. Even if it attacks, it doe so only because it is afraid that it will be attacked and its standard c living will be menaced. Such a nation, too, can make only a defensiv peace. It can make a peace allocating to various nations certain posses sions and resources in the way most likely to leave it undisturbed. Pe haps this is all we can look for from the present war. Perhaps we can ca such a peace a peace.

WHAT MAD PURSUIT?

Probably never in modern times has there been an actual scarcity c material goods in the Western world. Yet the record of crime, poverty oppression, revolution, and war is plain for all to see. In the light of th record we must conclude that our faith that our diseases could be cure by larger and larger doses of material goods has been naïve. We hav assumed that technology could take the place of justice. Through the ai of science we could produce so much that everybody would have every thing he wanted. This theory has been reduced to absurdity by the c incidence of the zenith of technology and the worst depression and th most terrible war in history.

All we can be certain of about the postwar world is that nobody wi be thinking of anything but his economic condition. We shall all hav been deprived of the gadgets to which we have been devoted, whether w owned them or not, and this will make us gadget crazy after the war. Th great hopes of industrialists are built on this great fact. The postwa boom is the pot of gold at the rainbow's end. We can do without no because there will be pie in the sky by and by. Then at last there will b plenty for everybody. There will be. But there always has been. Every body hasn't been able to get it, and those who got it were dissatisfie nevertheless. Bigger and better wars have succeeded one another wit greater and greater rapidity. If what we want is gadgets, if this is ou ideal, then we can say we are civilized if we like, for we are united in th hot pursuit of a very common ideal. But we can hardly hope that such civilization will last. Societies which cherish the ideal of comfort are in th position of the man who planned to tear down his barns to build greate That night his soul was required of him.

There is no doubt that our country is afflicted with many material problems, and they must be solved. The sanctity of the business cycle cannot be permitted to condemn people to starvation in the midst of plenty. Full employment is necessary if a durable industrial society is to be maintained. A pint of milk a day is not an excessive ambition for the human race. It could be attained by taking a little thought and probably without great sacrifices on the part of anybody. The slums, the monopolies, the land question, the cartels, the tariffs, the labor problem, the racial issue—all these questions can be tackled empirically and momentarily solved. If we were prepared simply to take the view that we are all consumers, that this is, economically, our only common bond, and that we should unite as consumers in the conviction that everybody should get the most of the best for the least, many of our economic difficulties would cease to plague us. In this view the pressure group that tries to keep us from getting the most of the best for the least is our natural enemy; and the remedy is not to form a pressure group of our own to get a larger share of the consumer's dollar for less, but to abolish all pressure groups, so that the consumer may get the most of the best for the least. Industrial tariffs justify agricultural tariffs, which justify higher industrial tariffs, which justify higher agricultural tariffs, and so on to the end of time.

The trouble with the empirical attack on economic problems is that it assumes that we can accomplish a just distribution of material goods without knowing or caring what justice is and even without a conviction that there is such a thing as justice. This attitude is sentimentalism, that vague desire to improve our fellow men which, since it has no other standard, erects the standard of our own prejudices as that by which the condition of everybody else must be judged. The sentimentalist will resort to force, if necessary, to give the rest of mankind the benefit of his prejudices. This is certainly better than using force to preserve or to increase one's own comfort. But those who want to fight for selfish ends will always enjoy the enthusiastic cooperation of those who want to fight to make other people like themselves. The selfish are delighted with the assistance of the sentimental: the propaganda of the sentimental sounds so unselfish.

To rest content with an empirical attack on economic problems is dangerous not only because it is empirical, but also because it distorts the relative significance of living and living well. The distortion of education in America, and particularly that distortion of Negro education associated with the great name of Booker T. Washington, shows the necessity of em-

phasizing over and over again that in the practical order it is the end that is the first principle. Unless we know where we are going there is no point in moving at all. The end of life is not life, but the good life. Without clarity and conviction about the end any steps we take toward "improvement" can lead to real improvement only by accident. They are just as likely to take us further into the wilderness.

It may be said that it is necessary to settle economic questions before we proceed to the larger question of how to organize the world for the deliberate pursuit of a common ideal. On this theory the ideal of the most of the best for the least is regarded as a preliminary step which must be taken in order to get people into a condition in which they can think about something else. In a sense this is sound. Starvation and poverty and the constant fear of invasion do not supply a favorable atmosphere for pursuing ideals. Men must be able to live before they can think about what they are living for. But it is just as true that men must know what they are living for before they can organize a society which will let them live at all. The ideal of comfort, even if it carries with it the notion that everybody ought to be comfortable and nobody ought to be more comfortable than anybody else, will not suffice. There are two ways in which men can be made to sacrifice themselves for the comfort of others. They can be forced to do so, or they can voluntarily do so for the sake of an ideal higher than comfort. The first way is out of the question for us: we propose to bring the world freedom from fear. We must therefore resort to the second: if our ambition is to bring the world freedom from want, we can hope to achieve it only if we can discover a higher ideal for which men will sacrifice themselves. The rich may legitimately complain at having their money taken away from them if the sole object of doing so is to make somebody else rich. The poor will not give up their meager comforts merely to make others less uncomfortable.

PROFESSORS AS PARASITES

Aristotle said, "It is not the possessions but the desires of mankind that must be equalized, and this is impossible unless a sufficient education is provided by the state." Look at what has happened to education now. It has been more rapidly abandoned in this country than in any other except Germany. But Germany has not for some years pretended to be a democracy or to give a whoop for the brotherhood of man. Here since the Northwest Ordinance we have presumably been devoted to education as the means of making our ideal common and as one method of achieving it.

When it became clear that education would stop in this country at the

age of eighteen, a good many college presidents objected, just as a good many small businessmen objected when it began to look as though their undertakings might be abolished. But nobody else objected. If education is to help us get ahead, if it is for vocational training and social prestige, it must lose its hold on the popular imagination when the only vocation is soldiering and the only prestige military. And the weakness of the college presidents' position was that after insisting for half a century on the validity of getting ahead as the aim of the higher learning they could not make clear how it was that they had suddenly developed other and more essential aims for it, or how after dedicating themselves to getting ahead for so long a period they expected to implement these other aims which they had thought up for the emergency. For some reason or other, education has lasted a great deal longer in England and Canada than it has in this country, though England and Canada have been in the war much longer than we have and have been accustomed to make much less noise about education than we.

I think it fair to say that only a small fraction of the professors in this country believe in education. Offer a scholar a post in politics or in business and see how quickly he will snap it up. See the light that comes into his eye when he tells you about the realities he has faced, the big names he has met, the policies he has influenced, the streamlined trains he has been on, and the hotel suites he has got away from less potent individuals. This is life at last. We are a short-term people, given to quick swings of feeling and much bustle and activity. We all belong to the cult of success. It is not altogether the professor's fault that he becomes dissatisfied with his place out of the main stream of the life of his country and that he feels that his contemporaries set so little store by him and his work that there is no use carrying it on. In the days of the Brain Trust we used to see references in the press to professors as parasites living on the charity of others, and ungrateful parasites at that, since some of them sometimes ventured to criticize, in a mild way, the system and even the individuals who provided their subsistence. What is honored in a country will be cultivated there. If the ideals of the scholar are not the ideals of the country, he must exist as a tolerated excrescence on the periphery of society or assimilate his ideals to those of the country. The position of a tolerated parasitical peripheral excrescence is not enviable enough to justify us in blaming the professor who gives up his ideals.

EQUAL TREATMENT OF EQUALS

What are the ideals which should be common to all the peoples of the

earth and which they should deliberately pursue? The first obstacle we meet in attempting to answer this question is the doctrine, very popular among liberals, that there can be no community of ideals. Truth, they say, is relative to the environment. Environments differ; therefore there can be no truths common to them. Virtue is relative to the environment. A good man in modern Greece might be a bad man in contemporary America, and would almost certainly be one in ancient Greece. The great lesson we have to learn, according to this doctrine, is the lesson of tolerance, of live and let live, each to his taste, and it takes all kinds to make a world. The Chinese are peculiar, even the modern Greeks are peculiar, but they will leave us alone, and we will leave them alone, and we'll get olive oil from Greece and tea from China and let them have machine tools in exchange and everything will be all right.

But the Germans and the Japanese are peculiar, too, and one of the most peculiar things about them is that they will not leave us alone. They have the strange conviction that they are entitled to things that other people have. And they insinuate that the way in which they propose to get them is the way in which the other people got them. How shall we persuade the Germans and the Japanese that this way of getting things has gone out of style?

One way of doing it would be to exterminate them. The expressions of Lord Vansittart and his cannibalistic equivalents in America have certainly had one effect: they have prolonged the war. If you were bound to be exterminated if you surrendered and had a chance of survival if you fought, you would go on fighting until you were exterminated.

But I take it that the most bloodthirsty of our friends do not seriously contemplate the massacre of 150 million people. What they really mean is that Germany and Japan must be so reduced in military and industrial strength that they can never again threaten the peace of the world. The fate of the attempt to treat Germany this way after the last war warrants a certain skepticism about the success of a like effort after this one. And suppose we did make Germany and Japan harmless for centuries, what guarantee have we that as soon as Russia, India, and China have the requisite industrial power they may not decide that where Germany and Japan failed they will succeed? After all, these countries have been so far away, before the world began to shrink, and have been so concerned with their domestic problems that we have had little practical experience with their peculiarities. Perhaps latent in all of them is the distressing predatory peculiarity of the Germans and the Japanese. The Mexican and Spanish wars and the acquisition of the Canal Zone suggest that it may

even be latent in us, and that the reason it has not appeared in action more often is that we took almost everything we needed from the Indians.

We want a world civilization. We want the peoples of the earth to unite in the pursuit of a common ideal. Thus, and only thus, shall we make the world one community. We want this community to endure. If it is to endure, it must be built upon the solid rock of human nature. We must insist that no matter how environments differ human nature is, always has been, and always will be the same everywhere. Above all nations is humanity; and beneath all human law and custom lies the natural moral law which is the same for all men. The various governments which make up the spiritual community must be conducted not for the good of rich men, or white men, or educated men, but for the good of all men. Justice, the equal treatment of equals, must hold each state together, and justice among the states must hold the world community together, for nothing else will.

The administrative structure of the political organization of a world community is beyond the scope of this paper. What we are talking about is the deliberate pursuit, on a worldwide scale, of a common ideal. If we can determine the ideal and discover how we might persuade ourselves and persuade others to join in its pursuit, our present requirements will be met. In any event, any world political organization must follow and not precede agreement upon and pursuit of the common ideal. The fate of the League of Nations is decisive on this point.

THE HABIT OF JUSTICE

If we want a world civilization we shall have to join in the pursuit of the democratic ideal. We shall have to try to get true democracy everywhere. You may well say that the ideal is unattainable. We have not succeeded in making this country democratic; how can we ever hope to make the whole world democratic? My answer is that if we cannot make the whole world democratic we had better give up the idea of a durable world civilization, for the only civilization that can endure is a civilization based on the common humanity of men, on their common human rights, and only democracy recognizes these rights. People will fight, and are entitled to fight, until they get the rights which human nature carries with it. Some people will fight after they have these rights; but the united conscience of the world can deal with them. The reason why marauders have been so difficult to deal with in the past is that there was no united conscience of the world. We were all marauders. We could not muster much

moral fervor against a man or nation that was doing exactly what we ha
done and would like to do again.

You may reply that democratic governments have been very unjus
very sordid, very lawless, and full of inequality. But they were not de
mocracies. They merely pretended to be. The external forms of a goverr
ment are not important. Hitler's plebiscites did not make Germany
democracy. Woman suffrage did not purify politics. Chicago has bee
plundered by Republicans and Democrats alike. What matters about
political system is its aim and execution. A society which aims at the vi
tue and intelligence of all the people is a truly democratic society, for it
cornerstone is the dignity of every human being.

If we want a durable world civilization, then, we must strive for worl
democracy. How shall we proceed? How can we get the Germans an
the Japanese to be democratic? We cannot force them to be democratic
Democracy rests on deliberate consent. We cannot force a democrati
education upon them; for even if we knew what a democratic educatio
was, we could not supply the teachers or the inspectors to staff the Ger
man and Japanese schools, and we could not control the conversations o
German and Japanese children with their German and Japanese parent
out of hours. If we cannot terrorize them into democracy and cannot edu
cate them into democracy, how can we make them democratic?

A military defeat may help. The New York *Times* has suggested tha
"perhaps the example of the power of democratic nations to win victorie
over totalitarian nations and then deal justly with them would be
enough." But the next generation may cherish the hatreds growing ou
of this war as Hitler cherished those which grew out of the last. Changing
circumstances in various parts of the world may seem later to offer con
venient opportunities for the exploitation of that spirit of revenge which
has been the most conspicuous feature of European politics since 1870.

Defeat plus justice might be enough. The combination has never ye
been tried. But we cannot treat the Japanese and Germans justly unless
we are just. Justice is a virtue. Virtues are habits. Habits are formed by
acts. If we are to be just to the Germans and Japanese we must have
formed the habit of justice by repeated just acts. We must be members
and missionaries of a just society. Think of the hope that would come to
the millions who do not want to be fascists or ruled by fascists if the
American people should decide that the way to change the face of the
earth was to change their own hearts.

THE SELF-EVIDENT TRUTHS

Can the American people change their hearts? Though we can hardly be said to practice freedom, law, equality, justice, and democracy, we are further along that road than any other nation. The words, moreover, are words on which we have all been brought up. No political leader has yet dared to call upon Americans to espouse the cause of inequality, injustice, and tyranny. Though we haven't bothered to understand the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence, because we haven't had to; though we have used these phrases sometimes as slogans and sometimes as opiates; though we have thought of them as the guarantors of continued and increasing comfort, it should not be as difficult for us as it would be for nations unfamiliar with them to grasp the meaning of these phrases, to establish them as the goal toward which we must strive, and to turn household words into household practices. The best postwar planning we can do is to make the United States a working model of democracy now.

Here arises the responsibility of the individual. The character and ideals of a country are the character and ideals of the individuals who inhabit it. Upon each one of us, therefore, is thrown the obligation to understand and to pursue the democratic ideal. After all, ten good men would have saved Sodom and Gomorrah. The same fraction of our population might save this country, and through it the world; for everywhere there are men who are anxiously scanning the horizon for some sign that somewhere the standard of humanity will be raised. When it is raised they will rally to it.

If we want to convince the world of our intention to make America a working model of democracy, we should join in the effort to get a few things done as evidence of the sincerity and seriousness of our purpose. These things may be insignificant in terms of the ultimate destiny of the race; but they take on significance in the context of those worldwide doubts of our integrity which would permit our enemies to pass off the expression of our intentions as high-sounding propaganda.

Is it possible to get anything done in wartime? The answer usually is that nothing is possible in wartime because all we can do in wartime is to try to win the war. It is difficult to take this argument seriously. A frontal attack on racial and religious discrimination, an attack based on the common humanity of men, would not divert us from the war effort. It would, perhaps, strengthen the war effort, because it would help to unite people who may now see little reason why they should fight to preserve an order in which they fail to detect the beauties commonly associated with the American way.

The attempt to break up monopolies and cartels, an attempt based on the natural right of all men to the means of life, may inconvenience corporations now engaged in the manufacture of munitions. But if these combinations are not broken up, we can hardly convince our own people, to say nothing of those in the oppressed countries of Europe and Asia, that we actually propose that just distribution of material goods which goes by the name of freedom from want. This will cost some money and will interfere somewhat with concentration on the immediate task of producing munitions; but it may be that the gains, even from the strictly military point of view, will outweigh the losses.

IF THIS BE PESSIMISM

It would not divert us from the war effort to assert the political rights of man by getting rid of the poll tax; the state of Tennessee has just done it without being torn by civil strife. Some states seem to get along without a tax that levies on consumption and hence on the poor man rather than the rich.

It would not divert us or be particularly difficult to recognize that the aim of the state is the virtue and intelligence of the people and to open education on the basis of merit to all the people of this country, regardless of their color, their parents' condition of servitude, or the resources of the state of the union where they happened to be born. It would not divert us to establish national competitive scholarships so that any young person who could show that he ought to be educated could get the best education we had to offer. Nor would it be expensive, quite to the contrary, to exclude from education those studies which impede the preparation of the young for life in a democratic civilization, and to base the curriculum on the proposition that if we are all to be free we must be educated for freedom. It would not divert us or be expensive to try to figure out what education for freedom is, so that in addition to the blessings which it might confer on our country, we might be able to tell our defeated enemies what it is in case they happened to ask us.

But the primary change we have to make is the one we have insisted on for the Germans and the Japanese. We must want to be democratic. If we want to be, we shall be. If we want to be, all these questions of political machinery and social practice will answer themselves. Justice, equality, and law, a society devoted to virtue and intelligence—these things are matters of resolution. We can have them if we want them. If we want them, we shall get an education calculated to produce them. If we want them, we shall get a tax system, a party system, a political order, and a social structure that exemplify them.

If you say I am a pessimist, I deny it. I say I am an optimist; for I hold that we need not give up because "you can't change human nature." Human nature is good, and we can realize it if we will. The time may be long and the motion slow. But we can become human beings, democratic human beings, if we want to be. The price may be high for all of us. Pressure groups pay a high price for democracy if the price is going out of business. Educators pay a high price if the price is the reconstruction of a system to which the habits of a lifetime have wedded them. Legislators pay a high price if the price is democratic performance instead of democratic oratory. Every one of us pays a high price if the answer to the question "What shall I do to be saved?" is the same as that given two thousand years ago. But what is the price of declining to pay the price? It is the possible loss of the war. It is the certain failure of the peace. It is the surrender of civilization.

More on This Topic

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What Do *You* Think?

1. Do you think that a just and durable world peace is really possible? What is the evidence of history on this point? Do you believe that "war is inevitable"?

2. In your opinion, in order to achieve world civilization, must the world accept an ideal, pursue it deliberately, and pursue it as common to the whole world community? Discuss.

3. Must world political organization follow, not precede, agreement upon and pursuit of the common ideal? Is political unity necessary? Do you think that there can be agreement upon a common ideal?

4. How much common ground of principles and idealism exists among the United Nations? How can this be expanded? What are the obstacles and differences?

5. Should democratic government and a democratic way of life for all peoples be the American war aim? Is Mr. Burnham correct in arguing that such a program is a real basis for fanaticism and would lead to more wars?

6. Do you agree that the only civilization that can endure is a civilization based on the common humanity of men, on their common rights, and that only democracy recognizes these rights? If the whole world cannot be made democratic, must the ideal of a durable world civilization be given up?

7. Why does war endanger the survival of democracy? Do you agree with Mr. Burnham that "in many cases we can see that democracy is encouraged and made more lively by conflict"?

8. Do you think the United States is a democracy at the present time? Is Mr. Hutchins correct in saying that "the best postwar planning we can do is make the United States a working model of democracy now"? If democracy is to be achieved, what steps would you suggest toward achieving this end?

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